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**NATURAL RESOURCE USES (NRU) SUBCOMMITTEE**

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**GALVESTON BAY COUNCIL  
SUBCOMMITTEE MEETING SUMMARY**

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**16 September 2021**

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<b>SUBCOMMITTEE CHAIR</b> Cherie O'Brien, TPWD	<b>SUBCOMMITTEE VICE CHAIR</b> Philip Smith, GBF
<b>NRU COORDINATOR</b> Lindsey Lippert, GBEP	

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**Members/Participants Present**

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Scott Alford (USDA-NRCS), Alexis Baldera (Audubon Texas), Cynthia Clevenger (GBEP), Bryan Eastham (TPWD), Rose Esteves (HAPRD), Wendy Forester (GBEP), Cassidy Kempf (HPARD), Erin Kinney (HARC), Haille Leija (GBF), Lindsey Lippert (GBEP), Celina Gauthier-Lowry (Texas AgriLife), Christopher Marshall (TAMUG), Lisa Marshall (GBEP), Lalise Mason (Scenic Galveston), Kristen McGovern (GBEP), Kelli Ondracek (HPARD), Ethan Placke (Houston Parks Board), Christian Rines (GBEP), Linda Shead (various), Matt Singer (GBF), Chris Smith (ABNC), Philip Smith (GBF), Charrish Stevens (NOAA-NMFS),

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**Planning and Priorities for FY 2023 Funding**

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Project proposals were sent out in advance of the meeting for review. Members were asked to keep the subcommittee priorities in mind while reviewing. The priorities selected by the NRU Subcommittee for the FY23 finding cycle were:

#	Priority	Summary
1	Habitat Acquisition	The continuation of land conservation efforts.
2	Enhancement of Existing or Ongoing Restoration/Conservation Efforts	Addressing the needs of completed or ongoing efforts that may need additional maintenance or support. This includes, but is not limited to, issues such as expansion of project footprints, post-construction erosion issues (such as a breach), additional capacity of nesting habitat, and intrusion of invasive species.
3	Benefit to Native Fish and Wildlife	Projects should benefit Federal and State Listed Species or Species of Greatest Conservation Need but can also benefit nongame fish and wildlife. Nongame fish and wildlife refers to all animals that have no legal hunting season; species that are not hunted like robins, lizards, armadillos, etc.
4	Brings Funding, Work Leverage, Multiple Goal Benefit to the Subcommittee	Efforts must be made to expand projects beyond the scope of GBEP dollars and promote collaboration and partnerships. Preferred projects should address and cite multiple goals of the "Protect and Sustain Living Resources" Action Plans or other organizations management plans (restoration, enhancement, etc.).

5	Project Urgency	Implementation of project is urgent (now or never). Applicants should state whether project is at risk for development, accelerated loss, loss of other funding or match, etc. along with the timeline for risk.
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The NRU Subcommittee received four proposals that implement performance measures and outputs of the Living Resource Action Plans of the Galveston Bay Plan, 2nd Edition (GBP).

Proposal Name	Grantee	Total Request	Recommendation
1. Conservation Assistance Program (5/5)	GBF	\$100,000	\$100,000
2. Baytown Nature Center Oyster Reef Restoration and Shoreline Protection	GBF thru City of Baytown	\$100,000	\$70,000
3. Blackhawk Park Habitat Restoration Project	HPARD	\$83,000	\$50,000
4. The Impact of Cold-Stunning Events as Physical Stressors on Sea Turtle Movement and Behavior in Galveston Bay	TAMUG	\$96,453	FY23: \$80,000 FY24: \$16,453
Total		\$379,453	\$300,000

Once all proposals had been presented to the group, the subcommittee discussed which projects should take priority. A consensus-based decision was made to recommend all projects for FY22 funding to the Budget and Priorities (B&P) Subcommittee, with reduced funding on the Baytown Nature Center, and first year funding for Blackhawk Park to match the average NRU funding request. The remainder of the Cold Stunning project will be recommended to be funded out of FY 24, as research project have special authority to secure funding to finish out. The remainder will have to come to the subcommittee in FY24 to potentially finish out projects. The alternative funding strategy should additional funding become available would be to fully restore funding to Baytown and Blackhawk and fund the remainder of the Cold Stunning project will be presented as an option to B&P. Projects selected by the B&P Subcommittee would be presented to the Galveston Bay Council at the November meeting for approval.

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### Updates from the Estuary Program

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#### NRU Project Updates

\*Spreadsheet available on request.

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#### Other

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## **Selection of A Presenter for Next Meeting - Deferred**

### **Roundtable**

#### *Float the Boat*

First is the Artist Boat's upcoming signature fundraising event, [Float the Boat](#), a dinner series on November 12, 13, 19, and 20, 2021. Artist Boat will be gathering again under the stars, on the coastal prairie, at Artist Boat Coastal Heritage Preserve over four dinner events honoring One in a Million Women in Coastal Conservation each evening.

- Advocacy: Diane Wilson, Activist and Author, November 12
- Restoration: Linda Shead, Shead Conservation Solutions, November 13
- Conservation: Helen Drummond, Executive Director of Houston Audubon, November 19
- Leadership: Cherie O'Brien, Natural Resource Specialist, Texas Parks and Wildlife Department, November 20

#### *National Estuaries Week*

Second, National Estuaries Week takes place on September 18-25, 2021. Many of you are planning some great events and volunteer opportunities. As one of two estuary programs in Texas, GBEP is excited to have such great partners who work every day to protect and preserve one of Texas' most valuable resources. Below are tools and resources for participating in events and sharing on social media channels. You can also find this information on the GBEP website [gbep.texas.gov/](http://gbep.texas.gov/).

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### **Adjourn**

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### **Future Meetings**

Quarterly NRU Meeting - December 2021

Invasive Species Workgroup Meeting - TBD

Oyster Restoration Workgroup Meeting - TBD